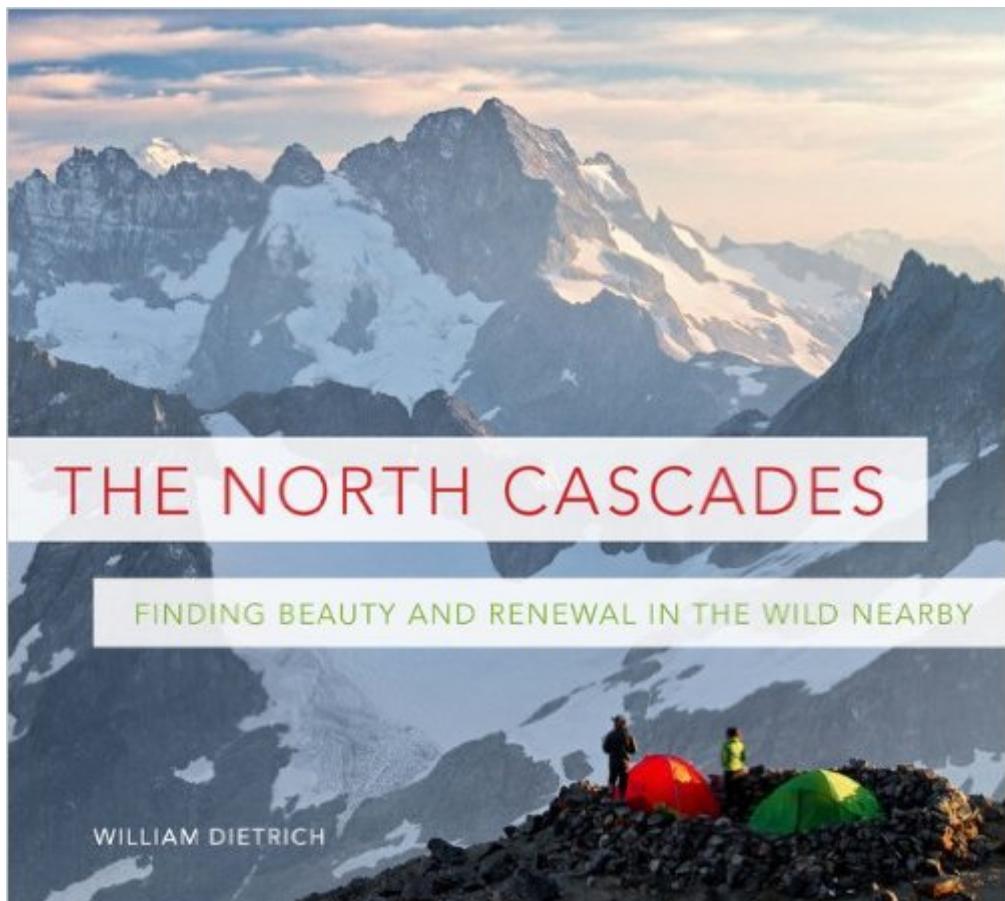


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The North Cascades: Finding Beauty And Renewal In The Wild Nearby



Synopsis

Experience a magnificent region through the words and images of accomplished writers and photographers and local residents. Pulitzer Prize-winning author William Dietrich presents the rich history and challenges facing this rugged habitat just hours from Seattle. In his foreword, Richard Louv examines the importance of preserving our local wilderness areas for generations to come. Poet Gary Snyder shares musings from his time spent as a fire lookout in the region. Guidebook author Craig Romano encourages boots-on-the-ground exploration, from day hikes to more ambitious backcountry travel. Christian Martin, of North Cascades Institute, profiles leaders dedicated to protecting this landscape. Twenty photographers, including Art Wolfe, Ethan Welty, Benj Drummond, Paul Bannick, Amy Gulick, and Steven Gnam, bring the North Cascades to stunning visual life. From the summit of Mount Baker to the sandy bottom of the Skagit River, Washington's North Cascades hold some of the most sublime mountain summits, lowland old growth forests, and pristine rivers on the planet. Some of these features are safely contained within national park boundaries or federally designated wilderness areas, but few people realize how many acres remain unprotected to this day. With a growing regional population, and development putting more pressure on this region, The North Cascades draws our attention to the many reasons that the integrity of this rich ecosystem must remain intact. Released in 2014 in honor of the 50th anniversary of the landmark Wilderness Act, and the 50th anniversary of the original North Cascades photo book by The Mountaineers that helped inspire the creation of North Cascades National Park. More than twenty conservation and recreation organizations working in the North Cascades lent their perspective to this book.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I love the pictures in this book - some of them by my friend Paul Bannick. And I know many of the people who donated funds to support the creation of the book, and am linked to many of the authors in a friend-of-a-friend capacity. So I really wanted to like this book. But the book really doesn't hang together well. It is a whole series of small articles, each by a different author, and not a coherent whole. They are all on the same topic - the North Cascades, but sadly this book just doesn't come together as something thought out as a single work of non-fiction. It's more like a bunch of essays cut & pasted together than a collaborative work by several co-authors working to a common vision. This book needed a stronger concept, and stronger editing too. The pictures are great. Some of the insights of the authors are interesting. But it just doesn't hang together well.

I had the privilege of serving as an autumn artist-in-residence in North Cascades National Park in 2014, and one of the rangers very generously gave me a copy of this book. I found the principal essays by William Dietrich both artful and informative, and I learned much about the human and natural history of the region. Some, but not all, of the other essays in the book were less substantial, tending toward a Chamber-of-Commerce boosterism. As others have noted, the photography throughout is outstanding. I can't stop gazing at the cover. The book as a whole does well to remind Washingtonians of a rich treasure at their doorstep and to introduce others from around the country to a mountain area that has yet to lodge in the national imagination. Nine out of ten people I meet in my hometown of Santa Barbara, California, have not heard of North Cascades National Park.

I've always known there is something special about the North Cascades and this book affirmed that feeling. With 2.7 million acres of protected areas in the U.S. and Canada, the territory is a half a million acres bigger than Yellowstone National Park. They have been called the "American Alps." They are not the tallest mountains in the U.S. but they have sharp inclines and a thousand alpine lakes. Mountain climbers love them for developing their climbing skills. Some interesting facts include that Jack Kerouac spent a summer at the Desolation Peak fire lookout in 1956. It contains the longest railroad tunnel in the U.S. The rainfall on the west side of the mountains can be as high as 160 inches a year while on the east side it is only ten inches. The first white man known to cross the range was a fur trader and explorer, Alexander Ross, in 1814. It is the most glaciated region in the lower 48, containing 750 glaciers. The one degree Celsius increase in temperature over the last

century has melted half of the glacial area in the North Cascades. Mt. Baker holds the record for the most snowfall recorded in a single season – 1,140 inches at the ski area in 1998-99. Mt. Shuksan is frequently said to be the most photographed mountain in the world. The latter part of the book contains vignettes of people who have played an important role in the North Cascades region. I found that part of the book not as interesting as the first part, highlighting the features of the territory. I really enjoyed this book about the mountains I see every sunny day and enjoy so much.

An intriguing look at the relationship between people and mountains. Whether you already know and love the North Cascades from firsthand experience, or have only admired them from afar, you will learn a lot from this beautiful book.

I've seen this book around and wanted to buy it on the cheap. I'm glad everyone is more into the Rockies--keep I-70 a traffic jam and stay out of the Cascades, that's what I say! 5 stars for our mountains! (Book looks good too)

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